

[Translated from Russian]

## "Catastrophe": Ukraine's future after the conflict revealed

<https://ria.ru/20240412/ukraina-1939497444.html>

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Kushch: After the conflict ends, Ukraine's population could shrink to 25 million



© AP Photo / Evgeniy Maloletka  
Kyiv. Archive photo

MOSCOW, April 12 — RIA Novosti. After the end of the conflict, there might be left only 25 million people in Ukraine, of which only a third will be economically active, said Kiev economist Alexey Kushch in an interview with the YouTube channel of political scientist Yuriy Romanenko.

"We are now seeing a rapid deterioration in all parameters, in all structural elements of human capital," Kushch said.

According to him, the demographic crisis is a national catastrophe for Ukraine, and its consequences could nullify even a "relatively successful" end of the conflict for Kiev.

"According to my estimates, the demographic profile of Ukraine after the war is 25 million people, of which ten million are pensioners, five million are children, about two to three million are disabled people and veterans, that is, people who receive certain social benefits. And the economically active core of the economy is about seven to eight million people," the analyst explained.

As Kushch noted, just a few years ago, the economically active population of Ukraine was about 17 million people.

"And the most striking thing is that the economically active core of the population is shrinking at a much faster rate than the (total. - Ed.) population, which is also falling. This is explained by the fact that the country is mostly populated by either pensioners or children whose parents cannot take them abroad. And the economically active part of the population is leaving the country by all means possible," he stated.

At the end of January, the Times newspaper reported, citing experts, that the birth rate in Ukraine had reached the lowest level in the world. In the summer of 2023, the analytical resource "Opendatabot", which aggregates official data in the country, reported that the birth rate in Ukraine had reached its lowest level in all the years of independence.

## **"Saying goodbye to parents": Ukrainian women take desperate steps**

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<https://ria.ru/20240318/ukraina-1933887630.html>

Analyst Kushch: Ukrainian women have started sending their sons abroad



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A girl during the celebration of Ukraine's Independence Day in the UK. File photo

MOSCOW, March 18 — RIA Novosti. Ukrainian women have begun to take out their teenage sons abroad, Kiev analyst and economist Alexey Kushch said on his Facebook\* page.

"A new format of migration from Ukraine and an example of the self-sacrifice of Ukrainian mothers — going abroad with their 15-16-year-old sons," Kushch wrote.

According to him, these Ukrainian women plan their "forced" trip "about a year in advance," selecting a country, learning the language, finding work, housing, and a place for their children to study.

"They save money, finish all their homework, say goodbye to their elderly parents: God willing, we'll see each other someday. <...> and go abroad,

where they mostly find low-skilled, hard work, sometimes taking several jobs..." — the analyst complained.

He added that many of these women have higher education.

The martial law in Ukraine was introduced on February 24, 2022, and the next day Zelensky signed a decree on general mobilization. Men aged 18 to 60 are banned from leaving the country for the duration of martial law.

\* Meta (Facebook and Instagram) activities are banned in Russia as extremist.

**Kyiv was engulfed in obscurantism in 2014, Miroshnik said**

<https://ria.ru/20240412/ukraina-1939660929.html>

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Miroshnik: Ukraine unleashed war in Donbass when obscurantism reigned in Kyiv



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Security forces in Kyiv. Archive photo

MOSCOW, April 12 - RIA Novosti. Kiev began its military operation against eastern Ukraine at the time when Kyiv was engulfed in obscurantism, competing in radical statements and open trampling of the norms of international humanitarian law, Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Foreign Ministry for the Crimes of the Kyiv Regime Rodion Miroshnik told RIA Novosti on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the start of the so-called "anti-terrorist operation".

Ten years ago, on April 13, 2014, those who seized power in Ukraine as a result of a coup began the so-called "ATO" against the LPR and DPR, which did not agree with the change of power and declared independence. The operation led to numerous bombardments of populated areas, as well as injuries and mass deaths of residents of Donbass.

"It was a time of obscurantism, competing in radical statements, and calling to "kill the Muscovites" that engulfed Kyiv. Against this background, the signing of the decree on the beginning of the "ATO" was only the formalization of events that had already taken place - the seizure of military units, the appointment of Maidan radicals to the [leading] positions in law enforcement agencies and the transition to the military stage of civil confrontation," Miroshnik said.

He noted that the creation of the Operation command center and the transfer of numerous law enforcement units, including units of the Ukrainian armed forces, under its jurisdiction became the legal starting point when "the Maidan government of the coup d'état disdained yet another constitutional norm and demanded the use of official state armed formations against citizens of their country and against peaceful protests."

The diplomat pointed out that the Ukrainian constitution contains a direct ban on the use of the army on the territory of its state and its participation in political showdowns. "From that moment on, the Kiev regime officially became a military dictatorship and started using security and military units against civilians. That is, there was started a period of open trampling of the norms of international humanitarian law," Miroshnik added.

He noted that at that time the West did not show any signs of indignation.

"Before the coup d'état, they threatened Yanukovych with all the heavenly punishments if he dared to take security forces to the Maidan, and after the coup they just did not pay attention to the fact the leaders of the coup d'état used the military that was armed with heavy weapons and aviation to suppress the protests. Moreover, they sent the army only to the southeast, despite the fact that the rampage of protests and seizures of administrative buildings in the west of Ukraine had began much earlier and was going on a more extensive scale. But the thing was that they were the "right" protesters, and in Donbass they were the "wrong" ones, and the Westerners were simply not interested in their rights and fate," the diplomat concluded.

## **Medvedchuk: Demographic catastrophe is the result of Zelensky's criminal policy**

<https://smotrim.ru/article/3623528>

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Ukraine continues to lose human resource on a colossal scale. Due to the policy of the Kyiv authorities, the country will face depopulation under any scenario of the war's outcome. Viktor Medvedchuk, Chairman of the Council of the Other Ukraine movement, discusses this in his new column on the media platform "Smotrim".

After February 24, 2022, Ukraine irreversibly slid into a demographic catastrophe. Multi-million migrations, loss of population from the territories not [in Kiev's] control, and the growing trend of population decline led to the depopulation and emergence of a serious threat to the existence of the country in the future.

Meanwhile, Zelensky completely excluded the demographic factor from his political agenda. He doesn't give a damn about the possibility of peaceful neutrality of the country, rejecting the Minsk agreements, and then when this [policy] led to a military conflict, he refused to negotiate and drove the Ukrainian people to the slaughterhouse.

It's not only the military activities, but also the loss of financial sovereignty and competitiveness, the disruption of the balance of the system of economic relations, total degradation, the orientation on processing only raw materials and the mono-industrial economic structure - all these lead to the forced migration, a decrease in the number of working-age people and at the same time to the increased load on the budget.

It is worth noting that Ukraine had an extremely negative population decline trend even before February 24, 2022. The demographic trends of recent years are definitely not in Zelensky's favor. Given the strategic mistakes and miscalculations of the Ukrainian leadership in recent years, the country was doomed to extinction and turned into a cesspool.

According to the State Statistics Service, the overall population decline in 2021 was 421 thousand people, in 2020 - 314 thousand people. Now the situation is even more catastrophic. In reality, the figures are even more terrifying. According to our estimates, based on the official data, the total permanent population of Ukraine, with the exception of the population of territories not under [Kiev's] control after February 24, 2022, as well as those located in the European Union, Russia and other countries, is about 19 million people. These figures represent the result of Zelensky's disastrous policies over the years of his stay in power.

The trend in decline of the birth rate is very indicative. For the six months of 2023, the birth rate in Ukraine fell by 28.4% compared to the same period in 2021: from 135,079 thousand (*sic*) to 96,755 thousand (*sic*). This is despite the fact that in the first half of 2021, there were 38 newborn per 100 deaths.

It is, undoubtedly, "thanks" to the budgetary stimulation of the birth rate. The amount of the childbirth benefit in Ukraine is 41,280 hryvnia or 1,128 dollars. It is worth mentioning that the first payment is made in the amount of 10,320 hryvnia or 282 dollars; the remaining amount is paid over 36 months in equal parts (860 hryvnia or 23 dollars per month). 23 dollars a month - this is what the state policy to stimulate the birth rate from Zelensky looks like.

While the Ukrainian government is conducting a targeted relocation of enterprises, analyzing the ecological capacity of territories and is deliberating on metropolises, the country continues to lose colossal human resources. The catastrophic state of industry and the economy as a whole is also of strategic importance in this matter.

According to the forecast of the Institute of Demography of the National Academy of Sciences, by 2033, Ukraine will face depopulation under any scenario of the outcome of the war. The Institute draws attention to the exhaustion of demographic potential, the inability to achieve just a plain reproduction of generations, high rates of aging and the cumulative demographic pressure on the economy.

Population growth is one of the fundamental bases for the functionality and is a core factor in the development of any state. An example of this is the actively developing countries of Asia. To achieve this it is required a more flexible macroeconomic policy and a fundamentally new, adaptive model of budgetary relations. Contrary to that, Zelensky's policy is to focus on a systemic reduction of the population. This is a modern "Morgenthau Plan" Ukrainian style - with mainly agrarian development, the destruction of industry, increased dependence on the West, and depopulation.

Unfortunately, a demographic catastrophe in Ukraine is inevitable and will be taking place in the years to come. It is because there is nothing more hopeless for the people of Ukraine than a war that drags on for years (including a large-scale mobilization). Same goes for the corrupt and repressive system of state power built by Zelensky, the closing of independent media and political parties, and persecuting those who disagree with the criminal policy of the authorities. Such a regime has no future. Neither has the country.